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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 005085

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: NEW CHAIRMAN OF BAGHDAD PROVINCIAL COUNCIL SETS
AGENDA

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR ROBERT S. FORD FOR
REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

1. (C) SUMMARY: At a December 19 meeting, Mu'een Hammed, the new Baghdad Provincial Council (BPC) Chairman, outlined his agenda for the coming months. Mu'een is a SCIRI Party member from Sadr City in Baghdad. He hopes to unify the BPC, strengthen the Provincial Reconstruction and Development Council (PRDC), activate committees and engage greater participation from the districts in Baghdad. END SUMMARY.

2. (C) Prior to becoming the new chairman Mu'een was the Deputy Chairman of the BPC. The former chairman, Mazin Makia, kept him informed of all council activities and ongoing projects of the PRDC. Mu'een appears to have learned from the experience and is prepared to initiate an aggressive campaign to improve local provincial government.

Hussein Mohammad Al-Tahan, Governor of Baghdad and also a member of SCIRI and the Badr Corps, supports the new council chairman. Mu'een said his first task is to unify the BPC and focus the members on the task of improving services for the people of Baghdad.

3. (C) Following BPC "Team Building" Mu'een intends to open the government to the sub-governorate councils in the province. He says he wants to increase their participation in holding elections, identifying the needs of the people, and improving essential services. Mu'een plans on improving coordination of the PRDC with the Provincial Support Team (PST) and then the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT). He has challenged the council to review their project priorities and verify the essential service needs of their communities. He also wants to emphasize the building of public parks, modernization of local schools, and investment from the Private Sector. Mu'een has also asked Mazin to stay on in the Executive Level of the BPC and to run for the deputy chairman position. Elections for the deputy will be held on Wednesday, December 21, at the BPC Council Building.

4. (C) Comment: It will be interesting to see if Mu'een maintains his technocratic posture after he takes office. SCIRI may exert its dogma and platform with greater determination following its apparent strong showing in Baghdad.
KHALILZAD